

# Lawful Fishing Methods

**Bait:** See VHS information on pages 14-15. Any fish (except lampreys, live carp, and goldfish) and frogs may be used as bait when legally taken and possessed. Wigglers (mayfly nymphs) and other aquatic nymphs and larvae also may be used for bait, but may not be taken from any trout stream except for personal use on the same stream. Crayfish may be taken for bait for personal use. See special exceptions on Michigan-Wisconsin Boundary Waters (p. 13).

**Bow Fishing:** Bows may be used on certain waters for certain species. See Table 6 (p. 12).

**Dip Nets:** Dip nets may be used for bowfin, carp, gar, smelt, and suckers in non-trout streams. A permit is required from a DNR office if equipment is to be left overnight. See Table 5, Netting (p. 12).

**Drop-shotting:** Having a weight suspended below a hook that is tied directly to the main fishing line. This gear may be used on inland lakes, Great Lakes, and Great Lakes connecting waters only. This gear may not be used on rivers, streams, or drowned river mouths (see Note 3, p. 8 for listing).

**Gaffs:** Gaffs may be used to help land lawfully hooked fish on all waters **except** on a trout stream.

**Gear Restrictions:** On all streams (including tributaries to the Great Lakes) from August 1 through May 31, it shall be unlawful to use multi-pointed hooks exceeding 3/8 inch between point and shank and/or single-pointed hooks exceeding 1/2 inch between point and shank. Also on all streams during this period it shall be unlawful to use lures exceeding one ounce. The Detroit R., St. Clair R. and St. Marys R. are exempt from these restrictions.

**Hand Nets:** Hand nets may be used to help land lawfully hooked fish. During April, May, and June, hand nets larger than 5 1/2 feet in circumference or having a handle exceeding 14 inches in length **may not** be used or possessed on designated trout streams except as provided in Table 5 (p. 12). Hand nets may also be used to take bowfin, carp, gar, smelt, and suckers. See Table 5, General Netting Regulations (p. 12).

**Hook and Line Fishing:** Fish so taken must be hooked in the mouth. Fish not hooked in the mouth must be returned to the water immediately. No more than two lines per person (including tip-ups) nor more than four hooks or lures may be used. **Except:** on L. Michigan, L. Huron, L. Superior and the St. Marys R., those persons in the act of trolling while targeting trout/salmon may use three rods/lines and attach no more than six hooks total on all lines. All hooks attached to an artificial bait or “night crawler harness” are counted as one hook. Hooks must be baited or attached to an artificial bait. You may use any number of hooks on one line for taking smelt in recognized smelt waters. Tip-ups and similar devices used for ice fishing must show the angler’s name and address. All lines must be under immediate control. Hook size regulations exist on certain streams (see Exceptions to General Regulations by County, p. 16-19).

**Hoop Nets:** May be used for burbot only on certain waters Dec. 15 - last day of February. Permit needed from a DNR office (see Table 5, p.12).

**Minnows For Personal Use:** **See VHS information on pages 14-15.** Minnows for personal use only may be taken with hook and line, seines, dip nets, and traps with a valid fishing license. In trout streams minnows may only be taken during the open season for trout by hook and line or minnow traps. Minnows may not be taken from Big Glen L., Hatlem Cr. (Leelanau Co.), Portage L., Torch L., the North and South Portage Canal (Houghton Co.), in that portion of L. Superior west of Big Bay Point or any of their tributaries for 1/2 mile above their mouths. Gear restrictions are as follows: Seines must not be over 12 feet by 4 feet; hand nets not over 8 feet square and without sides or walls; and minnow traps not over 24 inches long. Minnow traps must bear user’s name and address. Cast nets (not exceeding 8 feet in diameter without walls or sides) may be used to take minnows, alewife, smelt, and shad in the Great Lakes, L. St. Clair, and the Detroit R., St. Clair R., and St. Marys R.

**Spearing:** Hand, rubber, or spring-propelled spears may be used for certain species. See Table 6 (p. 12).